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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/244,304	02/03/1999	MICHAEL W. BEACH	EN998071	3605

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SHELLEY M. BECKSTRAND
61 GLENMONT ROAD
WOODLAWN, VA 24381

EXAMINER	
SUBRAMANIAN, NARAYANSWAMY	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
3624	

DATE MAILED: 04/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/244,304	BEACH ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Narayanswamy Subramanian	3624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *14 January 2005*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *12-19* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *12-19* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to applicant's communications filed on January 14, 2005. The amendments to claims 12 and 13 made by the Applicants in their communication dated October 15 and amendments to claims 14-19 made in the communications filed on January 14, 2005 have been entered. Claims 12-19 are pending and have been examined. The rejections and response to arguments are stated below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 12, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anderson et al (US Patent 6,05,380) in view of Lyke et al (US Patent 5,151,948).

Claims 12, 14 and 15, Anderson teaches a method, a computing system and a program storage device respectively for operating an account payable computing system, the method comprising: preprocessing before introduction into an accounts payable data base original electronic invoices received from a vendor to identify duplicate invoices (See Anderson Column 4 lines 26-30, 34-42) including: identifying invoices having a same vendor invoice designation (See Anderson Column 4 lines 34-35, existing account implies a vendor invoice designation), same purchase order number (See Anderson Column lines 26-28, purchase order number is inherent in 810/ 811 invoices), and same item number (See Anderson Column lines 26-28, item number is inherent in 810/ 811 invoices); automatically communicating a duplicate invoice

rejection transaction to an intermediary for said original electronic invoice identified as a duplicate invoice without posting said original electronic invoice to said accounts payable data base (See Anderson Table 2); and introducing said original electronic invoices not identified as duplicate invoices into said accounts payable data base (See Anderson Column 4 lines 26-30). A computing system and a program storage device for performing the above method is inherent in the disclosure of Anderson.

Anderson does not teach the steps of calculating a net sum amount of items on invoices identified as having said same vendor invoice designation, said same purchase order number, and said same item number; identifying as a duplicate invoice an original electronic invoice for which said net sum amount is greater than zero and communicating a transaction from an intermediary to the vendor.

Lyke teaches the steps of calculating a net sum amount of transaction documents and identifying an error when the total of a series of transaction documents do not match the total shown on an associated summary document. (See Lyke Column 2 lines 51-56 and 59-68) The documents are interpreted to include invoices identified by the Anderson disclosure and the matching of the totals is interpreted to include the step of determining if the net sum amount is greater than zero. The step of communicating a transaction from an intermediary to the vendor is old and well known. For instance when checks cannot be honored due to insufficient funds, they are sent back from the intermediary to the party that originated the transaction. This helps the transaction originating party to take corrective steps in a timely manner. In the instant case the transaction originating party is the vendor.

Both Lyke and Anderson are concerned with the problem of identifying errors in processing transaction documents. It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the steps taught by Lyke to the disclosure of Anderson. The combination of the teaching taken as a whole suggests that the accounts payable department would have benefited from early detection of duplicate invoices.

4. Claims 13 and 16-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anderson et al (US Patent 6,05,380) in view of Lyke et al (US Patent 5,151,948) and further in view of Smith et al (US Patent 5,111,395)

Claim 13, Anderson and Lyke combined teach a method of claim 12 as discussed above including the step of identifying invoice records having a same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, and same item number, calculating a net sum of selected portions of a record and rejecting back as a duplicate record of said original record if the net sum is greater than zero.

Anderson and Lyke combined do not explicitly teach the steps of first sorting said original electronic invoice against an accounts payable production table for same vendor and same vendor invoice number; second sorting hits from said first sorting for same purchase order billed; and third sorting hits from said second sorting for same items billed on purchase order.

Smith teaches the step of sequentially sorting the records by various fields within a record in order to identify duplicate records (See Smith Column 1 lines 39-45, 49-51, Column 7 lines 6-8, Column 13 lines 19-21 and claim 1).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Anderson to include the steps of first sorting said original

electronic invoice against an accounts payable production table for same vendor and same vendor invoice number; second sorting hits from said first sorting for same purchase order billed; and third sorting hits from said second sorting for same items billed on purchase order because it improves the efficiency of the system by early detection of duplicate invoices and avoid storing duplicate records in its database. It also provides a system that is user friendly.

Claims 16, 18 and 19, Anderson teaches a method, a computing system and a program storage device respectively for operating an accounts payable computing system, the method comprising: receiving an original electronic invoice from a vendor (See Anderson Column 2 lines 13-17); rejecting original electronic invoices received from vendors not initialized as trading partners (See Anderson Column 4 lines 34-42, Table 1, missing account implies that a vendor has not been initialized), and translating original electronic invoices received from vendors initialized as trading partners (See Anderson Column 3 lines 48-50); assuring that during said translating the count of translated invoices rejected and accepted equals the number of original electronic invoices translated, and feeding accepted invoices for preprocessing (See Anderson Column 3 lines 48-55 and Column 4 lines 26-29); preprocessing invoices accepted for preprocessing as received from a trading partner vendor, said preprocessing selectively validating a transaction, calculating line item accounts, deducting sales tax, and identifying original electronic invoices which are duplicate invoices before introduction into an accounts payable data base (See Anderson Column 4 lines 26-29, checks are interpreted to include these features), said identifying duplicate invoices including: auditing only debit invoices one at a time for duplicate invoices and committing to said accounts payable data base only those debit invoices which are not duplicate invoices (See Anderson Column 2 lines 47-48, debit invoices

are implied in the disclosure); identifying invoices having a same vendor invoice designation, same purchase order number, and same item number (See discussion of Claim 12 above); said identifying including execution of check verbs, each said check verb being satisfied to identify said invoice as a duplicate invoice; said check verbs including determining that this vendor is a vendor for which duplicate invoice checking is to be performed (See Anderson Column 4 lines 26-29, 34-38 and Table 1, the checks are interpreted to include these features), determining that there is a purchase order history of previous purchase orders for said invoice (See Anderson Column 12 lines 20-24, invoice analysis is interpreted to include analysis of purchase order history), and determining for each item on said invoice a sum of its purchase order history, with said sum being greater than zero for at least one said item (See Anderson Column 4 lines 26-29, 34-38, the checks are interpreted to include these features); automatically communicating a duplicate invoice rejection transaction to an intermediary for an original electronic invoice identified as a duplicate invoice without posting said original electronic invoice to said accounts payable data base; posting said invoice to a workflow database and assuring that the number and amount of invoices posted to said workflow database equal the number and amount of translated invoices accepted for preprocessing (old and well known in the art);logging to an error queue invoices failing audit for subsequent manual processing (See Anderson Table 12); logging to an exceptions and warnings log table as exceptions invoices which are determined during preprocessing to be duplicate invoices and as warnings invoices which during preprocessing were recalculated or had sales tax deducted (See Table 12); introducing said original electronic invoices not identified as duplicate invoices into said accounts payable data base (See discussion

of Claim 12 above). A computing system and a program storage device for performing the above method is inherent in the disclosure of Anderson.

Anderson does not teach the steps of sorting all inbound records in a debits/credits sequence, calculating a net sum of items for a record, and identifying as a duplicate record an original record for which said net sum is greater than zero and communicating a transaction from an intermediary to the vendor.

Lyke teaches the steps of calculating a net sum of items for a record, and identifying as a duplicate record an original record for which said net sum is greater than zero (See discussion of Claim 12 above). The step of communicating a transaction from an intermediary to the vendor is old and well known (See discussion of Claim 12 above).

Both Lyke and Anderson are concerned with the problem of identifying errors in processing transaction documents. It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the steps taught by Lyke to the disclosure of Anderson. The combination of the teaching taken as a whole suggests that the accounts payable department would have benefited from early detection of duplicate invoices.

Anderson and Lyke combined do not explicitly teach the step of sorting all inbound records in a debits/credits sequence.

Smith teaches the step of sequentially sorting the records by various fields (See Smith Column 1 lines 39-45, 49-51, Column 13 lines 19-21 and claim 1). This sorting would have helped the system sort the records into debits/credits sequence and process them differently (Also see discussion of Claim 13 above).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Anderson to include the step of sorting all inbound records in a debits/credits sequence because it improves the efficiency of the system by early detection of duplicate invoices and avoid storing duplicate records in its database. It also provides a system that is user friendly.

Claim 17, see discussion of claim 13 above.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 12-19 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dr. Narayanswamy Subramanian whose telephone number is (703) 305-4878. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Thursday from 8:30 AM to 7:00 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached at (703) 308-1065. The fax phone number for the Patent Office where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

N. Subramanian
March 31, 2005

Hani Kazimi
Primary Examiner

HANI M. KAZIMI
PRIMARY EXAMINER